

§ 15.26

(2) When the amount recovered is less than such total loss, the allowable amount is determined by deducting the recovery from the amount of such total loss.

(3) For this purpose, the claimant's total loss is to be determined without regard to the maximum payment limitations set forth in § 15.20. However, if the resulting amount, after making this deduction exceeds the maximum payment limitations, the claimant shall be allowed only the maximum amount set forth in § 15.20.

§ 15.26 Claims procedures.

(a) *Award.* The Counsel for Claims and Compensation, the Regional Solicitors, and the Associate Regional Solicitors are authorized to consider, ascertain, adjust, determine, compromise and settle claims filed under this subpart that arose within their respective jurisdictions, except that any claim for an amount in excess of \$25,000 shall fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Counsel for Claims and Compensation.

(b) *Form of claim.* Any writing received by the Office of the Solicitor within the time limits set forth in § 15.21(d) will be accepted and considered a claim under the Act if it constitutes a demand for compensation from the Department. A demand is not required to be for a specific sum of money.

(c) *Notification.* The determination upon the claim shall be provided to the claimant in writing by the deciding official.

§ 15.27 Computation of award and finality of settlement.

(a) The amount allowable for damage to or loss of any item of property may not exceed the lowest of:

(1) the amount requested by the claimant for the item as a result of its loss, damage or the cost of its repair;

(2) the actual or estimated cost of its repair; or

(3) the actual value at the time of its loss, damage, or destruction. The actual value is determined by using the current replacement cost or the depreciated value of the item since its acquisition, whichever is lower, less any salvage value of the item in question.

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(b) Depreciation in value is determined by considering the type of article involved, its cost, its condition when damaged or lost, and the time elapsed between the date of acquisition and the date of damage or loss.

(c) Current replacement cost and depreciated value are determined by use of publicly available adjustment rates or through use of other reasonable methods at the discretion of the official authorized to issue a determination upon the claim in question.

(d) Replacement of lost or damaged property may be made in kind wherever appropriate.

(e) At the discretion of the official authorized to issue the determination upon the claim in question, a claimant may be required to turn over an item alleged to have been damaged beyond economical repair to the United States, in which case no deduction for salvage value will be made in the calculation of actual value.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, settlement of claims under the Act are final and conclusive.

§ 15.28 Attorney fees.

No more than 10 per centum of the amount in settlement of each individual claim submitted and settled under this subpart shall be paid or delivered to or received by any agent or attorney on account of services rendered in connection with that claim.

§ 15.29 Reconsideration.

(a) *Deciding Official.* While there is no appeal from the decision of the deciding official in regard to claims under the Act, the deciding official may always reconsider his or her determination of a claim.

(b) *Claimant.* A claimant may request reconsideration from the deciding official by directing a written request for reconsideration to the deciding official within 180 days of the date of the original determination. The claimant must clearly state the factual or legal basis upon which he or she rests the request for a more favorable determination.

(c) *Notification.* The determination upon the reconsideration will be provided to the claimant in writing by the deciding official.